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NEWS

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For Immediate Release:

PATRICK COBURN TO BE INDUCTED INTO EIU HALL OF FAME

CHARLESTON – An accomplished Illinois newspaper publisher who has dedicated his life to serving others both as a journalist and a civic leader has been named Eastern Illinois University's Journalism Alumnus of the Year.

Patrick Coburn, publisher of *The State Journal-Register* in Springfield and *The Courier* in Lincoln since 1996, will be inducted into the Department of Journalism's Hall of Fame on Thursday, Oct. 23, as part of the university's homecoming activities.

The ceremony begins at 6 p.m. in Buzzard Auditorium.

Coburn, 62, has supported EIU's students and journalism program in many ways through the years. He has been instrumental in securing funds for the Copley Minority, Copley Freshman and Copley Sophomore scholarships, worth \$1,000 annually. All told, Copley has given EIU students more than \$20,000.

His newspaper has hired more than 20 EIU graduates, helping to guide them through their first years on the job.

And, last year, he helped oversee improvements to the *Daily Eastern News'* press.

"He has been good to Eastern Illinois University graduates and has looked out for the journalism department," said John Ryan, adviser to the college newspaper. "His loyalty to Eastern has been outstanding."

"Pat has been an enthusiastic supporter of and advocate for EIU's journalism program," said Les Hyder, chair of the journalism department. "He comes through when we call and ask for his assistance."

Coburn was an editor for the *Daily Eastern News* when he attended EIU from 1961-65. He then applied the practical skills he learned at Eastern to join the staff of the *Register* as a police beat reporter. He held a number of reporting assignments before becoming city editor and, then, managing editor. He was named associate publisher of the *The State Journal-Register* in October 1996, a few months before becoming publisher of both the *The State Journal-Register* and *The Courier*. He also serves as vice president of Copley Press, Inc.

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Coburn has actively served on several professional boards. He was chairman of the Mid-America Press Institute, president of both the United Press International Illinois Editors Association and Illinois Associated Press Editors Association, and served on the national Associated Press Managing Editors Association board. In 2001, Illinois AP editors named him to the Lincoln League of Journalists for making a contribution to newspapers. Coburn presently serves as the head of the directors for the Illinois Press Association.

"Pat is the epitome of what we hope all EIU journalism majors will be throughout their careers," said Hyder. "He has a passion for the best that journalism can deliver. And deliver he has throughout an illustrious and distinguished career."

Coburn has also been active in his community. He is president of Friend-in-Deed, a charity that provides assistance to disadvantaged families in central Illinois, is a trustee of Downtown Springfield, and has been chairman of Kids Voting Illinois, to name just a few of his service endeavors.

Coburn, who collects contemporary art, has also been a long-time supporter of the arts in Springfield.